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SENATE BILL 773  
43RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1997  
INTRODUCED BY  
SHANNON ROBINSON

AN ACT  
RELATING TO EDUCATION; AMENDING SECTIONS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL  
CODE TO REQUIRE STUDENTS TO READ A BOOK A WEEK AND WRITE A THEME  
PAPER ABOUT EACH BOOK.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. Section 22-2-8.3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,  
Chapter 33, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-2-8.3. SUBJECT AREAS--MINIMUM INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS  
REQUIRED--ACCREDITATION. --

A. The state board shall require instruction in  
specific subject areas as provided in Subsections B through [F]  
G of this section. Any public school or school district failing  
to meet these minimum requirements shall not be accredited by  
the state board.

B. All first and second grade classes shall provide

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1 daily instruction in language arts skills, including phonics,  
2 and mathematics.

3 C. All third grade classes shall provide daily  
4 instruction in language arts skills and mathematics.

5 D. All fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes shall  
6 provide instruction in language arts skills, with an emphasis on  
7 writing and editing; mathematics; science; and social studies,  
8 including geography. The following subject areas shall be  
9 offered in the remaining instructional time: art; music;  
10 physical education; health; and computer literacy, including a  
11 general familiarization with computers and support in the areas  
12 of mathematics and writing through word processing.

13 E. All seventh grade classes shall provide  
14 instruction in English, with an emphasis on grammar and writing;  
15 communication skills or science; New Mexico history and  
16 geography; mathematics; and physical fitness. Remaining  
17 instructional time may be used for electives listed in  
18 Subsection [G] H of this section.

19 F. All eighth grade classes shall provide  
20 instruction in English, mathematics, United States history and  
21 science. Remaining instructional time may be used for electives  
22 listed in Subsection [G] H of this section.

23 G. In addition to the requirements made in  
24 Subsections D through F of this section, all students in fourth  
25 through eighth grades shall be required to read a book a week

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1 and submit a weekly theme paper about each book.

2 [G-] H. The electives authorized in Subsections E  
3 and F of this section are art, industrial arts, chorus, band,  
4 home economics, typing, creative writing, speech, drama,  
5 Spanish, computer literacy and other electives approved by the  
6 state board. "

7 Section 2. Section 22-2-8.4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,  
8 Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended by Laws 1995, Chapter 174,  
9 Section 1 and also by Laws 1995, Chapter 180, Section 1) is  
10 amended to read:

11 "22-2-8.4. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS. --

12 A. At the end of the eighth grade or during the  
13 ninth grade, each student shall prepare an individual program of  
14 study for grades nine through twelve. The program of study  
15 shall be signed by a student's parent or guardian.

16 B. [~~Beginning with students entering the ninth grade~~  
17 ~~in the 1986-87 school year]~~ Successful completion of a minimum  
18 of twenty-three units shall be required for graduation. These  
19 units shall be as follows:

20 (1) four units in English, with major emphasis  
21 on grammar and literature, including the requirement that to  
22 earn each unit of English, students shall read a book a week and  
23 submit a weekly theme paper about each book;

24 (2) three units in mathematics;

25 (3) two units in science, one of which shall

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1 have a laboratory component;

2 (4) three units in social science, which shall  
3 include United States history and geography, world history and  
4 geography, and government and economics;

5 (5) one unit in physical fitness;

6 (6) one unit in communication skills, with  
7 major emphasis on writing and speaking, which may include a  
8 language other than English; and

9 (7) nine elective units. Only the following  
10 elective units shall be counted toward meeting the requirements  
11 for graduation: fine arts, i.e., music, band, chorus and art;  
12 practical arts; physical education; languages other than  
13 English; speech; drama; vocational education; mathematics;  
14 science; English; R. O. T. C.; social science; computer science;  
15 health education; and other electives approved by the state  
16 board.

17 With the approval of the local school board, participation  
18 on an athletic team or in an athletic sport during the school  
19 day may count toward fulfillment of the physical education  
20 required unit.

21 C. Final examinations shall be administered to all  
22 students in all classes offered for credit.

23 D. ~~[Beginning with students entering the ninth grade~~  
24 ~~in the 1986-87 school year]~~ No student shall receive a high  
25 school diploma who has not passed a state competency examination

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1 in the subject areas of reading, English, math, science and  
2 social science. If a student exits from the school system at  
3 the end of grade twelve without having passed a state competency  
4 examination, he shall receive an appropriate state certificate  
5 indicating the number of credits earned and the grade completed.  
6 If within five years after a student exits from the school  
7 system he takes and passes the state competency examination, he  
8 may receive a high school diploma.

9 E. The state board may establish a policy to provide  
10 for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and  
11 testing provisions of the Public School Code."

1 FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
2 FIRST SESSION, 1997  
3  
4

5 February 27, 1997  
6

7 Mr. President:  
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9 Your EDUCATION COMMITTEE, to whom has been referred  
10

11 SENATE BILL 773  
12

13 has had it under consideration and reports same with  
14 recommendation that it DO PASS, and thence referred to the  
15 PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.  
16

17 Respectfully submitted,  
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22 Cynthia Nava, Chairman  
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25 Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

The roll call vote was 8 For 1 Against

Yes: 8

No: Rawson

Excused: Duran

Absent: None

S0773ED1

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1 FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
2 FIRST SESSION, 1997  
3  
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5 March 10, 1997  
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7 Mr. President:  
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9 Your PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, to whom has been  
10 referred

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12 SENATE BILL 773  
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14 has had it under consideration and reports same with  
15 recommendation that it DO PASS.  
16

17 Respectfully submitted,  
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22 Shannon Robinson, Chairman  
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Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

The roll call vote was 5 For 0 Against

Yes: 5

No: 0

Excused: Adair, Boitano, Vernon, Smith

Absent: None

S0773PA1

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**FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION, 1997**

**March 19, 1997**

**SENATE FLOOR AMENDMENT number \_\_\_\_\_ to SENATE BILL 773**

**AMENDMENT sponsored by SENATOR GORHAM**

**1. On page 3, line 1, after the period insert:**

**"All students in the seventh and eighth grades shall be  
required to read a book every two weeks and submit a  
theme paper about each book."**

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Senator Ramsay L. Gorham

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION, 1997**

**March 19, 1997**

**SENATE FLOOR AMENDMENT number \_\_\_\_\_ to SENATE BILL 773**

**AMENDMENT sponsored by SENATOR BOITANO**

1. On page 1, line 24, after the word "board" insert the following sentence: "Any public school or school district failing to meet the minimum requirements of the read a book a week program may not be accredited by the state board."

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**Senator Mark Boitano**

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Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

S0773FS2

# State of New Mexico House of Representatives

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION, 1997

March 19, 1997

Mr. Speaker:

Your EDUCATION COMMITTEE, to whom has been referred

SENATE BILL 773, as amended

has had it under consideration and reports same with  
recommendation that it DO PASS, amended as follows:

1. Strike Senate Floor Amendments 1 and 2.

2. On pages 2 and 3, strike all of Subsection G and insert in  
lieu thereof the following:

"G. In meeting the requirements made in Subsections D  
through F of this section, all teachers in fourth through eighth  
grades shall emphasize the importance of reading and writing by  
appropriately designating reading and reporting assignments  
commensurate with the students' abilities and integrating these  
expectations through thoughtful curricula."

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION, 1997

HEC/SB 773, aa

Page 15

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3. On page 3, line 21, strike the comma, and on lines 21 through 23, strike the underscored material.

4. On page 4, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following new subsection to read:

"C. In meeting the requirements of Subsection B of this section, all teachers in fourth through eighth grades shall emphasize the importance of reading and writing by appropriately designating reading and reporting assignments commensurate with the students' abilities and integrating these expectations through thoughtful curricula."

5. Reletter the succeeding subsections accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,

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Samuel F. Vigil, Chairman

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION, 1997

HEC/SB 773, aa

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Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chief Clerk) (Chief Clerk)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The roll call vote was 9 For 0 Against

Yes: 9

Excused: Miera, Nicely, S.M Williams, Wright

Absent: None

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